

the guardian weekly

April 2012

Level » Lower intermediate
Style » Lesson plan



Welcome to the Guardian Weekly's special news-based materials to support learners and teachers of English. Each month, the Guardian Weekly newspaper selects topical news articles that can be used to practise English language skills. The materials are graded for two levels: advanced and lower intermediate. These worksheets can be downloaded free from guardian.co.uk/weekly/. You can also find more advice for teachers and learners from the Guardian Weekly's Learning English section on the site.

President 'sorry' for tomato throwing son

Materials prepared by Janet Hardy-Gould

Instructions

Lesson focus: reading; and tense review
Materials: materials sheet, photos, article, dictionaries
Time: 60 minutes

- 1 Direct students to the photo of Nicolas Sarkozy (Photos, page 2). Students in pairs write three facts about him. Class feedback. Establish that he is tough on law and order - he has zero tolerance for troublemakers. **6 mins**
- 2 Direct students to the photo of Louis Sarkozy (Photos, page 2). Write up: *14-year-old son, palace, police officer, missiles, tomato, marbles, president, election, telling-off*. In groups students speculate what the news story is about. A student in each group makes notes and reports very briefly to the class. **12 mins**
- 3 Give out the article plus dictionaries. Students read to see if their version is similar. Class feedback. **10 mins**
- 4 Direct students to task 1 (Materials sheet, page 3). Elicit the correct question words from the prompts (in bold). Students read again and underline where they found the answers. Class feedback. **8 mins**
a __ things did Louis and his friends throw? (**number**)
b __ was the police officer standing? (**place**)
c __ made an apology to the policewoman? (**person**)
d __ did Louis' mother leave Sarkozy? (**date**)
e __ did Pierre's flight cost? (**money**)
f __ did Sarkozy once threaten to do? (**action**)
Answers: **a** How many - three, **b** Where - across from the palace, **c** Who - Nicolas Sarkozy, **d** When - 2007, **e** How much - \$50,000, **f** What - take a hose to troublemakers.
- 5 Direct students to the summary in task 2. Students find five mistakes. They then complete it with the verbs in bold put into the correct tense: present simple/continuous, past simple/continuous. Class feedback. **10 mins**
 15-year-old Louis Sarkozy (**a**) __ (**not live**) in France. His main home (**b**) __ (**be**) in London but he often (**c**) __ (**visit**) his father in Paris. On a recent trip, Louis and his friends (**d**) __ (**play**) in the palace gardens when they (**e**) __ (**throw**) some marbles and an apple at a policeman. The president soon (**f**) __ (**learn**) about the incident and we can imagine that he (**g**) __ (**be**) very angry. At the moment, the French newspapers (**h**) __ (**watch**) Sarkozy carefully because he (**i**) __ (**fight**) an election to become president for a third term.
Answers: **15** - 14, **London** - New York, **apple** - tomato, **policeman** - policewoman, **third** - second.
a doesn't live **b** is **c** visits **d** were playing **e** threw **f** learned **g** was **h** are watching **i** is fighting
- 6 Ask if they know a similar incident about the son/daughter of an important person. Revise vocabulary from the text: *put his foot in it, cause a scandal* etc. Students in pairs write about the incident and share with the class. **14 mins**

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Photos



Zero tolerance ... Nicolas Sarkozy *Stephane Mahe/Reuters*



Bad shot ... Louis Sarkozy *Martin Bureau/AFP*

Article: President 'sorry' for tomato throwing son

- 1 His father has zero tolerance for anyone who attacks a police officer, he doesn't like teenage troublemakers and he is in the middle of a difficult re-election campaign.
- 2 So you can only imagine the telling-off that 14-year-old Louis Sarkozy received after he threw a tomato and marbles at a policewoman guarding the French presidential palace.
- 3 Nicolas Sarkozy's youngest son was playing in the palace courtyard with two friends last month when they decided to target the officer standing across the road from the palace.
- 4 The first missile, a yellow marble, landed at the policewoman's feet. Surprised, she looked up to see who had thrown it and a tomato landed next to her on the pavement. The third missile, another marble, hit her cheek, police said.
- 5 The officer asked the gendarmes outside the palace gates to identify the culprits and they pointed to Louis and his friends.
- 6 A police spokesperson said the officer had reported the incident but she did not want to make an official complaint. She had received a personal apology from the president.
- 7 Louis was visiting his father from the US where he lives with his mother, Cécilia Attias. She is Sarkozy's second wife, who left him shortly after he became president in 2007.
- 8 It is not the first time that one of the Sarkozy boys has been in the newspapers. The eldest, Pierre, 26, a DJ, caused a scandal when his father sent a luxury jet to bring him back from Ukraine after he complained of a tummy ache. The flight cost French taxpayers \$50,000.
- 9 Young Louis appears to have his father's habit of putting his foot in it. But perhaps he has had a lucky escape this time. Nicolas Sarkozy once threatened to take a high-pressure water hose to troublemakers in some of Paris's poorer areas.
- 10 Sarkozy is hoping to become French president for a second term in a two-round election in April and May.

Original article by Kim Willsher, rewritten by Janet Hardy-Gould

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Materials sheet

Student tasks

1 Think of the correct question words to begin these questions. Use the prompts in brackets. Read the article again, answer the questions and underline where you found the answers.

a things did Louis and his friends throw? (**number**)

b was the police officer standing? (**place**)

c made an apology to the policewoman? (**person**)

d did Louis' mother leave Sarkozy? (**date**)

e did Pierre's flight cost? (**money**)

f did Sarkozy once threaten to do? (**action**)

2 Read this summary of the article. Find five mistakes. Complete the summary using the verbs in brackets. Put the verbs into the correct tense: present simple/continuous, past simple/continuous.

15-year-old Louis Sarkozy (a) (not live) in France. His main home (b) (be) in London but he often (c) (visit) his father in Paris. On a recent trip, Louis and his friends (d) (play) in the palace gardens when they (e) (throw) some marbles and an apple at a policeman. The president soon (f) (learn) about the incident and we can imagine that he (g) (be) very angry. At the moment, the French newspapers (h) (watch) Sarkozy carefully because he (i) (fight) an election to become president for a third term.